



Notes from the Director

No. 40

16 February 1979

DRUG RESEARCH

New publicity regarding the Agency's role in drug research projects has begun to appear.

It is based upon some 16,000 pages of documents released under the Freedom of Information Act. All this will undoubtedly raise new questions about the role of the Agency in behavioral research programs. While a point-by-point refutation of this material is impractical, I would like to put the entire matter in a proper context for the benefit of Agency employees and describe the status of any Agency activities in that area.

We know that there were improprieties during these tests in an earlier era. But we have provided all the evidence we found to proper authorities and the public. It is important to understand that CIA was primarily interested in the results of research initiated and sponsored by other organizations and conducted in accordance with professional and ethical standards applicable to the particular circumstances at the time. We have found no evidence that CIA exerted undue influence on such organizations or attempted in any way to coerce institutions to undertake research they might not otherwise have undertaken. Insofar as we are able to tell from our records, many of the studies supported by CIA were carried out openly and the results in many cases were published. The only classified feature of these research programs was the fact that CIA was the source of funds.

In 1975 the Church Committee was provided all documents and records concerning human behavioral research supported by the Agency which were known at that time. When additional records were discovered in 1977, I directed that these materials be provided to the SSCI and reviewed the entire matter in open session before that Committee and the Senate Subcommittee on Health and Scientific Research in August and September 1977. Moreover, I made a commitment at that time to make every effort to seek out and notify individuals who may have suffered some harm as a result of having been the subjects of drug research without their knowledge. Based on that commitment, there has been an ongoing program in the Agency to research available materials and determine how best to go about attempting to identify and notify such individuals.

There have been numerous allegations that various of us as Agency spokesmen have made contradictory or incorrect statements on this subject. I can assure you that we have checked carefully and these allegations are false. It must be recognized that documents from the voluminous materials released to the public under the Freedom of Information Act can and will continue to be used selectively to reflect adversely upon the Agency.



STAT

These attacks, based on activities far in the past, will undoubtedly continue. However, I want you to know that there are no improper programs now underway anywhere in the Agency. All of our activities are in strict accordance with existing law or policy guidance provided by the President, the NSC and the people of the United States through their Congressional representatives.

STANSFIELD TURNER
Director